

Their slender-

147 ness is deceptive, for their great strength lies
[482] in their legs, back, and neck, seen in their
ability to carry loads of 45 kilograms (100 lbs.)
and upwards, all day up and down hill without
undue fatigue . . . Hair form is straight,
142 coarse, and black. Gray hair or baldness are
very unusual. Body hair, as far as could be
observed, is negative.

143 As many as 99.56 per cent of Tzeltal be-
long to blood type O, which is one of the
highest frequencies registered in the Ma-
yance area. According to Matson and Swan-
son (1959, p. 50), "In general the more
143 isolated peoples such as the Lacandon, Tzel-
144 tal, Tzotzil and Cakchiquel show the high-
est frequency of the O gene." This condition
is attributed to the absence of racial mix-
ture.

CULTURAL CONFIGURATION

621 Like the Indians in the highlands of Gua-
[171] temala (Tax, 1937), the Tzeltal group them-
selves in communities which are distinct
social and cultural units, as is characteristic
621 of the tribe. Each community has its well-
184 defined lands, its own dialect forms, wear-
ing apparel, kinship system, politico-religious
organization, economic resources,
crafts, and other cultural features. Any na-
tive of the region finds it easy to identify
the origin of other Indians by noting their
speech, wearing apparel, or the goods they
621 sell. Solidarity between the members of
each community is strong and becomes
manifest in times of conflict with outside
groups or in their way of gathering accord-
ing to their "nationality" on fiestas or mar-
ket days when people of other communities
attend. On the other hand, no ethnic solidar-
ity whatsoever exists. Each community re-
[628] stricts itself to its own affairs and nothing
else; whatever happens to the other Tzeltal
communities is something altogether apart.

621 The territorial limits of these communi-
[632] ties do not always coincide with those of
[171] the municipalities, as in Guatemala. Var-
ious well-defined communities exist (in the
terms described above) which belong to

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